



by Rabbi Dr Raymond Apple z"l

TZAV

Travelling with the Mitzot

"The fire shall always be kindled on the Altar: it shall never go out" (Vayikra 6:6).

"Never" - or hardly ever?

The Talmud Yerushalmi tells us (Yoma 4:6) that the fire must never be allowed to go out, AF B'MASA'OT - "even during (the people's) travels". When the people were on the move the fire was carried in a covered vessel so that it would remain alight.

Taken literally, this law ensures that there is never any hiatus in the Altar fire. Looked at, in addition, symbolically, it has a message for the Jewish people wherever they happen to be.

Only if they carry the burning fire of Jewish feeling in their hearts are they safe as Jews.

Not even changed circumstances, urgent challenges and pressing priorities must be allowed to weaken their Judaism. Otherwise Judaism will suffer, and they themselves will be the losers and they will be

spiritually adrift without a guide or anchor.

The individual Jew should also remember when away from home on holiday or business that the mitzvot should come too. Shabbat never takes a holiday. Kashrut does not change because you are not at home.

Jewish morality too, like all the mitzvot, is part of living the Jewish life "when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you rise up."

The flame of Judaism must not be allowed to flicker, wherever you are.

Aharon's Garments

The sidra deals extensively with the duties of the kohanim. At one point it says, "He shall remove his garments and put on different garments" (6:4).

Rashi says, "In the garments in which one cooked for the master one does not pour the master's wine." The sages comment, "Hence one should remove weekday garments and wear special garments for Shabbat" (Bavli Shabbat 114; Maharsha's comment).

In these days of relaxed sartorial standards this is a timely reminder that special occasions require special clothing. Coming to shule on Shabbat or festivals, for example, should not

be in weekday and workday attire, or in the clothes one wears for sport or to go to the beach.

Rabbis have seen it all: women in skimpy clothes with no thought of modesty, men in shorts and sandals (on Kol Nidrei night I have actually seen a man in shule like that).

As a "kingdom of kingdom and a holy people" (Sh'mot 19:6), the rule in the sidra should be our criterion. -OZ

Y'HI ZICHRO BARUCH